

Message Text

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43

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 AF-10 DRC-01 AID-20 /132 W

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R 291221Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2326

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

USMISSION GENEVA

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

USINT ALGIERS

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 2510

ALGIERS AND GENEVA FOR SECRETARY'S PARTY

E O 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, IS

SUBJ: ISRAELI DOMESTIC POLITICAL SITUATION

REF: TEL AVIV 2410

SUMMARY: LABOR ALIGNMENT FOR SECOND TIME THIS YEAR ENTERS COALITION NEGOTIATIONS TO TRY TO FORM NEW GOVT. THIS TIME RABIN WILL HEAD LABOR ALIGNMENT'S NEGOTIATING TEAM, PROVIDING FIRST TEST OF HIS ABILITY TO REVITALIZE DOMESTIC POLITICAL SCENE. GENERAL EXPECTATION IS THAT COALITION TALKS, PROCEEDING SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH SECRETARY'S FIFTH VISIT TO MID EAST, WILL BE BRISK AND DECISIVE. LABOR PARTY LEADERSHIP WILL MAKE MAJOR EFFORT TO BRING NEGOTIATIONS TO SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION, HAVING MADE ASSESSMENT THAT FORMATION OF NEW GOVT NOW WILL BE TO ITS ADVANTAGE IN PREPARATION FOR NEW ELECTION LATER THIS YEAR OR IN EARLY 1975. END SUMMARY.

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1. AFTER PRESIDENT KATZIR FORMALLY DESIGNATED RABIN TO TRY TO

TO FORM NEW GOVT APRIL 26, FORMAL OPENING ROUND OF COALITION NEGOTIATIONS BEGINS APRIL 29 WITH MEETING OF LABOR ALIGNMENT, NATIONAL RELIGIOUS PARTY (NRP) AND INDEPENDENT LIBERAL PARTY (ILP) NEGOTIATORS. RABIN HIMSELF WILL HEAD LABOR ALIGNMENT NEGOTIATING TEAM, PROVIDING FIRST TEST OF WHETHER HE WILL BRING NEW STYLE TO ISRAELI POLITICS. GENERAL EXPECTATION IS THAT NEGOTIATIONS WILL BE BRIEF AND TO THE POINT, WITH RELATIVELY RAPID EXAMINATION OF AVAILABLE OPTIONS. WE DO NOT EXPECT THAT SECRETARY'S VISIT TO MID EAST WILL DELAY NEGOTIATING PROCESS (ALTHOUGH VISIT MAY BE CITED AS EXCUSE FOR PROLONGATION OF PROCESS IF EARLY BUT NOT HOPELESS - APPEARING IMPASSE DEVELOPS).

2. IN OPENING PHASE, LABOR ALIGNMENT NEGOTIATORS ARE EXPECTED TO EXAMINE ALL AVAILABLE POSSIBILITIES (REFTEL). USUALLY WELL INFORMED JOURNALIST (NAKDIMON, YEDIOT AHARONOT) NOTES APRIL 29 THAT LABOR PARTY LEADERSHIP, IF IT FINDS PROSPECT OF RENEWED TRIPARTITE COALITION BLOCKED DUE TO NRP INTRANSIGENCE ON RELIGIOUS ISSUES AND UNITY GOVT, WILL MAKE STRONG EFFORT TO FORM GOVT WITHOUT NRP. LABOR LEADERSHIP CALCULATION IS THAT, GIVEN VIRTUAL INEVITABILITY OF NEW ELECTION, IT IS CLEARLY IN LABOR PARTY'S INTEREST TO HAVE NEW TEAM IN PLACE DURING INTERIM PERIOD AHEAD. WE HAVE BEEN TOLD BY ONE OF RABIN'S YOUNGER ASSOCIATES THAT, IN ADDITION TO ABOVE CONSIDERATION, LABOR PARTY IS CONCERNED TO AVOID SITUATION IN WHICH BEGIN WOULD HAVE OPPORTUNITY TO TRY TO FORM MINORITY GOVT OF LIKUD AND RELIGIOUS PARTIES.

3. MOST PROBLEMATIC ISSUE ON NEGOTIATING AGENDA AT OUTSET IS GREAT GAP BETWEEN NRP AND ILP POSITIONS ON RELIGIOUS ISSUES, WITH FORMER DEMANDING NEW CONCESSIONS AND ILP INSISTING THAT IT WILL NOT AGREE TO ANY FURTHER ACCOMMODATION TO NRP DEMANDS. NRP YOUTH GROUP HAS REITERATED ITS INSISTENCE ON NATIONAL UNITY GOVT, MAKING IT UNLIKELY THAT MORE THAN PORTION OF NRP WOULD JOIN NEW RABIN GOVT IF OTHER ISSUES WERE TO BE RSOLVED.

4. POSSIBILITY OF FORMING 61 MEMBER GOVT OF LABOR ALIGNMENT, ILP AND CITIZENS RIGHTS MOVEMENT (CRM), HAS
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REVIVED WITH APRIL 26 STATEMENT BY CRM SPOKESMAN TO EFFECT THAT HIS PARTY WOULD CONSIDER ENTERING RABIN GOVT IF ASKED. CRM LEADER SHULAMIT ALONI, PRESENTLY OUT OF THE COUNTRY, IS EXPECTED TO RETURN IN NEXT FEW DAYS. WE ASSUME THAT NO CRM DECISION WILL BE TAKEN UNTIL RABIN AND SHE CONSULT TOGETHER.

5 ILP AND CRM HAVE ALREADY STATED THAT THEY WOULD AGREE TO SERVE IN RABIN CABINET ONLY ON BASIS OF EXPLICIT COMMITMENT TO GO TO NEW ELECTION AFTER AGRANAT REPORT IS IN, MAKING IT

CLEAR FROM OUTSET THAT NEW GOVT WOULD BE INTERIM ONE.
PRESUMABLY SUCH COMMITMENT WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE
TO LABOR ALIGNMENT NEGOTIATORS WHOSE IMMEDIATE CONCERN IS
TO FORM NEW GOVT AND GET THROUGH INITIAL VOTE OF CONFIDENCE
IN KNESSET.
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